

Conceptualizing Cultural and Social Dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean Area

A european perspective

Edited by
**Michelle Pace and
Tobias Schumacher**

Conceptualizing Cultural and Social Dialogue in the Euro-Mediterranean Area

A European Perspective

This collection critically analyzes the dynamics and complexities of the wider Euro-Mediterranean area on the basis of theory-informed designs and conceptual frameworks.

Since the predominant focus in the literature has been on the first (political and security partnership) and the second baskets (economic and financial partnership) of the Barcelona Process, our contributors analyze social and cultural issues (the third basket of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership), drawing upon linkages between concepts, structures and policy outcomes.

Some articles focus on the impact of the EU's actor capability in the area of EU policies towards the South in enhancing interregional dialogue, understanding and cultural cooperation. Others focus on a critical discourse analysis of dialogue, identity, power, human rights and civil society (including Western and non-Western conceptions). Finally, the volume culminates with a discussion on cultural democracy in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

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CONTENTS

1 Preface: The Importance of Conceptualizing Cultural and Social Co-operation in the Euro-Mediterranean Area	
GLEND A G. ROSENTHAL	1
2 Introduction: The Study of Euro-Mediterranean Cultural and Social Co-operation in Perspective	
TOBIAS SCHUMACHER	3
3 Imagining Co-presence in Euro-Mediterranean Relations: The Role of ‘Dialogue’	
MICHELLE PACE	13
4 Setting the (Cultural) Agenda: Concepts, Communities and Representation in Euro-Mediterranean Relations	
RAFFAELLA A. DEL SARTO	35
5 The Politics of De-Paradoxification in Euro-Mediterranean Relations: Semantics and Structures of ‘Cultural Dialogue’	
STEPHAN STETTER	53
6 Security through Intercultural Dialogue? Implications of the Securitization of Euro-Mediterranean Dialogue between Cultures	
HELLE MALMVIG	71
7 Global Civil Society Across the Mediterranean: The Case of Human Rights	
LAURA FELIU	87
8 EU Relations with Islam in the Context of the EMP’s Cultural Dialogue	
SARA SILVESTRI	106
9 Wounded by a Divide Syndrome. The Impact of Education and Employment on Euro-Med Cohesion	
JOACHIM JAMES CALLEJA	127
10 Conclusion: Cultural Democracy in Euro-Mediterranean Relations?	
MICHELLE PACE	147
<i>Index</i>	158

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Preface: The Importance of Conceptualizing Cultural and Social Co-operation in the Euro-Mediterranean Area

Since its inception in November 1995, the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership has created various links between the now-37 member states of the European Union and the countries of the southern littoral of the Mediterranean. Little concern about the existence or the fostering of such links was shown by policymakers until then, although the occasional scholar tried to develop the notion that the countries bordering the Mediterranean constituted, particularly in historical times, an important strategic, political, economic and even a cultural entity. Fernand Braudel's seminal 1966 study of the Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World at the time of Philip II of Spain is the chief modern example of this. In classical times, Greek and Roman authors were also greatly interested in what brought the peoples of the Mediterranean littoral together – rather than what set them apart.

Today, in a post-9/11 context, a Madrid and London bombings era, we do not hear much about links and commonalities in this area. The tone of the discourse centres on 'clash of civilizations', threats, terrorism and irreconcilable political, economic and cultural differences. In the space of eleven years or so since the start of the so-called Barcelona Process, an optimistic and far-reaching initiative undertaken by the European Union and its Mediterranean neighbours, efforts to create a 'common' area, a zone of 'shared' prosperity and a social, cultural and human 'partnership' have come to seem quixotic, even pointless, in the current international climate.

The third 'basket' of the Social, Cultural and Human Chapter of the Barcelona Agenda, whose achievements and failures these studies explore, represents a radical change in European thinking. It represents the ambitious idea promoted by European Union policy makers that encouraging understanding between cultures and exchanges between civil societies is a necessary component of any political,

2 *Conceptualizing Cultural and Social Dialogue*

strategic or economic programme aimed at promoting democracy in neighbouring Mediterranean countries. Testimony to the ongoing conviction in the crucial importance of all these components may be found in their incorporation in the more recent 2003 European Neighbourhood Policy.

Since the European Union has repeatedly declared that full membership in its institutions and full participation in its policies is restricted to 'European' countries only, any special relationship or privileged partnership has to be based on much more than mere trade preferences or opening of borders to immigrant workers. The key question is whether the EU can really cast off old, sometimes neo-colonial, attitudes and present-day fears and work toward the stated objective set forth by the European Commission in 2002 of bringing 'people on both sides of the Mediterranean closer together, to promote their mutual knowledge and understanding and to improve their perception of each other'. This collection presents a thorough analysis of how this objective can be implemented in practice and is a recommendable read for academics, civil society representatives, EU policy makers and students of Euro-Mediterranean studies who are keen to explore new theoretical and empirical grounds in this field.

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Introduction: The Study of Euro-Mediterranean Cultural and Social Co-operation in Perspective

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When the Foreign Ministers of the European Union (EU) and the then 12 Mediterranean Non-Member countries (MNC) in November 1995 met in Barcelona and solemnly inaugurated the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP), this event marked a turning-point in the history of Euro-Mediterranean relations.¹ For almost 40 years, Europe's policies towards its southern periphery were based on financial assistance and economic co-operation and thus characterized by most observers as a pure aid-and-trade approach (Gillespie, ed., 1997; Schumacher, 1998). With the entering-into-force of the Barcelona Process, however, Euro-Mediterranean relations were given a new framework which abolished the decade-old (European) pre-occupation with economic matters. In addition to a revised chapter on economic and financial co-operation, both the Barcelona Declaration and the new Euro-Mediterranean association agreements (EMAA), superseding the co-operation agreements concluded in the mid-1970s, provide for a political and security co-operation and, most of all, establish the so-called third basket which, in turn, allows for social and cultural co-operation and herewith a social and cultural dialogue. Given the popularity of frightening and actually unjustified assumptions that the two main religions along the northern and southern Mediterranean shores, i.e. Christianity and Islam, were in a continuing and deeply conflictual relation (Huntington, 1996) which supposedly precludes Western and Islamic societies from peaceful and collaborative co-existence, Euro-Mediterranean social and cultural co-operation was also conceived with the aim to dispel any putative clash of civilizations. Like the first basket, the creation of the third *volet* has been recognized right from the outset as a major component of the EMP, not least due to the fact that

4 *Conceptualizing Cultural and Social Dialogue*

it is nowadays commonly acknowledged that political, economic, social and cultural behaviours are interlinked with each other (Martín and Byrne, eds., 2004). With its objective 'to bring people on both sides of the Mediterranean closer together, to promote their mutual knowledge and understanding and to improve their perception of each other' (European Commission, 2002: 5), as well as with its focus on the development of human resources, co-operation between municipalities and regions, a dialogue on cultures and civilizations, the media and youth, an exchange between civil societies, social development, health and migration, the scope of Euro-Mediterranean social and cultural co-operation is undoubtedly very ambitious.

Yet, ten years into 'Barcelona', not much is left of the original enthusiasm that encompassed the creation of the third basket. Instead, most critical observers agree that its pitfalls prevail (Panebianco, ed., 2003; Pace and Schumacher, 2004: 122–7). Certainly, the establishment and recent inauguration of the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures in Alexandria put the EMP and herewith the third basket temporarily back into the international spotlight. Yet, although the Foundation must be considered as a long overdue measure to remedy the absence of a 'catalyst for all initiatives aimed at increasing dialogue and common understanding',² it cannot compensate for the fact that social and cultural co-operation in the framework of the EMP for most of the period since 1995 has been a sleeping beauty. The reasons for this failure are numerous and, most of all, due to structural deficiencies of both the Barcelona Declaration and the EMAA. Like the provisions on the political and security chapter, the relevant stipulations of the Declaration and its follow-up work programme, as well as of title VI of the EMAA, are vague and rather inexplicit. In a way, they can be characterized as a loose shopping list of principles and declarations of (good) intent, and lack any mention of concrete or at least potential implementation mechanisms.

Moreover, none of the objectives is linked to either the first basket or to the second basket, in spite of the alleged holistic character of the EMP (Barbé, 1996). As was already noted by one observer, the third basket can hardly be called coherent as it is guided by two structurally very different themes (Jünemann, 1997). On one hand, it reflects some laudable awareness on the part of the then 27, and nowadays 37, partners with regard to the socio-economic situation in the southern Mediterranean and the cultural differences between the societies of the two shores, and envisages progressive measures for closer co-operation. On the other hand, however, it has a rather harsh undertone as it relates to a-cultural issues such as the fight against illegal immigration, terrorism and international crime, drug trafficking and the fight against corruption. This division is highly problematic and has to be questioned. Of course, its proponents may argue that the Barcelona Declaration as well as the EMAA follow and, thus, subscribe to the enlarged understanding of security, which was introduced by Barry Buzan two decades ago (Buzan, 1983). Yet, this contrasts with the view that these issue-areas in the context of 'social' and 'cultural' co-operation appear as misplaced and somewhat alien. As the political elites in both the EU and the southern Mediterranean deal with them in the context of the chapter on political and security co-operation, it remains an open question why they had to be incorporated into the third basket. In addition, comparing the Barcelona Declaration

with title VI of the EMAA reveals that the two provisions are not truly coherent with each other. Whilst title VI stipulates that all issues related to the fight against illegal immigration shall be incorporated into the social dialogue, all of the remaining topics, as outlined above, are not subsumed under this section. The fight against terrorism, for instance, was included under title V of the EMAA, which implies that it is part of economic co-operation and, hence, falls under the jurisdiction and scope of the second basket.

It is this ambiguity, i.e. the inclusion of issue-areas that neither are directly associated *with* nor necessarily pertain *to* social and cultural co-operation, that has impeded real progress in the third chapter and contributes to the low degree of awareness of its strategic importance on the part of policy practitioners, academics and civil society actors on both sides of the Mediterranean. As the first study by Michelle Pace reminds us, language matters with regards to meaning formation and the conceptualization of politics, and pre-determines the path that is eventually taken to implement the stipulations the parties in question agree upon. In this vein, both the Barcelona Declaration and the EMAA, however, encompass a multiplicity of languages and run short of clear-cut definitions and operational criteria. In the case of the third basket, this has not only provided many of the (nowadays) 37 partners with exit-options and a legitimate excuse to display a non-engagement policy, which, in turn, is simply due to a lack of knowledge and/or sufficient interest. Even worse, as the whole Barcelona Declaration represents the lowest common denominator of 27, rather diverging than overlapping, governmental positions, the implementation path taken since 1995 to develop, launch and sustain the third basket is not a straight and coherent one.

Hitherto, of the ten areas that are stressed in the follow-up work programme of the Barcelona Declaration as priority areas for action, only four have attracted attention in the capitals of the EU member states and the MNC, though with mixed results as they are based on highly questionable foundations and assumptions. These four areas are media, youth and herewith exchanges between civil societies, and the dialogue between cultures (and civilizations); in addition, emphasis has been laid on cultural heritage. With regard to the latter and media co-operation, it took the parties more than three and five years respectively, to launch two initiatives, namely the Euro-Med Heritage Programme (EMHP) and the Euro-Med-Audiovisual Programme (EMAP). Notwithstanding the praise these two programmes regularly receive by the European Commission for their impact on the preservation of the cultural heritage and their focus on the preservation, production and distribution of documentaries that supposedly capture the essence of people's lives and cultures, respectively (European Commission, 2002: 11–14), they hardly contribute to one of the third basket's major goals of bringing the 'peoples [of both shores of the Mediterranean] closer, promoting understanding between them and improving their perception of each other' (Barcelona Declaration, 1995). This can be explained by the fact that both initiatives are highly specific and a domain of a tiny circle of experts. In particular, the potential impact of the EMAP was overrated by many in Brussels, as it faces severe constraints which are due to the tight control and pressure the state bureaucracies in the MNC exert on their individual media systems.

6 Conceptualizing Cultural and Social Dialogue

Unsurprisingly, projects which aim to address topics such as democratization or human rights, both of which are key concerns of the EMP, in an artistic-cinematic or simply properly journalistic way, have not yet had any chance of realization in the framework of the Barcelona Process. In contrast, the Euro-Med Youth Action Programme (EMYAP) with its focus on youth exchanges, volunteer work and support measures, has produced positive results in terms of confidence-building, empowerment of young people and the acquisition of inter-cultural competence. Yet, like the EMAP and the EMHP, the EMYAP, which entered into force only in 1999 and was suspended by the European Commission in early 2005 on the grounds of a putative need for restructuring, too often turned out to be a *domaine réservé* of co-opted, privileged and non-religious actors in the southern Mediterranean. This, in turn, is closely inter-linked to the problem of multiplicity of languages in the Barcelona Declaration, as mentioned above, and the different connotations and notions revolving around the meaning, actors and functions of key concepts such as culture, dialogue and civil society that, in fact, underpin the entirety of the third basket and the EU-sponsored so-called dialogue between cultures.

With regards to dialogue and civil society, no clear-cut and universally acceptable definition exists, as both concepts are highly value-laden and subject to different normative interpretations. Whereas, on one hand, this lack of consensus has obstructed Euro-Mediterranean cultural and social co-operation, it has not, on the other hand, provoked senior officials, which in a way do acknowledge the spoiler function of this deficiency,³ to examine and map the different notions with a view to reaching a common vocabulary that could eventually guide all activities related to the third basket. Also the scientific community dealing with the EMP has shown only a rudimentary interest for the EMP's third basket and thus its underlying concepts. This can be explained by the fact that the vast majority of studies which are of an empirical and, too often, purely essayistic nature, have been pre-occupied with the political and security chapter and the economic and financial dimension, respectively. Although there is a growing interest among scholars to analyse cultural and social co-operation from a more general perspective (Colas, 1997; Jünemann, 1998; Peresso, 1998; Panebianco, ed., 2003), very few studies, mostly with a focus on civil society (Jünemann, 2003; Mouawad, 2003), have been published focusing on a more theory-informed, or at least analytical, examination of some of the shortcomings of the third basket. In a way, this assessment is rather surprising in the light of the current 'moment of robust intellectual openness' (Latham, 1994: 8) and herewith the undisputable fact that culture, identity and dialogue are staging an exciting and powerful comeback in both post-Cold War and post-9/11 International Relations (IR) theorizing and research. Even though, as Alexander and Smith remind us (Alexander and Smith, 1993: 151), some of these issues were already subject to intellectual scrutiny during the first 20–25 years following the Second World War, it is undoubtedly the epochal turbulences in the early 1990s and, even more so, the tragic events of 11 September 2001 that have promoted the scholarly re-orientation toward culture and the acknowledgment of its significance enormously. This applies particularly to the critical camp of the IR discipline as it has hitherto proven to be the circle that is most interested *in* and open *towards*

a critical examination of culture as an important and influential factor of world politics.

It is in this light that this collection of studies has to be seen. While it certainly aims at shedding empirical light on the neglected and intellectually rather dark spot, called Euro-Mediterranean cultural and social co-operation, it sets out to provide for a more theory-informed and conceptual platform on which the latter, that is the study of the third basket, can be challenged, and, hence, inspired by, insights of critical thinking. Given the undisputable academic parochialism with regards to a theoretical and conceptual examination of the underlying building blocks of the third basket, the collection concentrates particularly on a critical analysis of the concept of Euro-Mediterranean (inter-)cultural and social dialogue. With this in view, and by considering the vivacious diversity of perspectives generally revolving around these issues, it follows the assumption that there is no one theory or methodology for the analysis of these concepts. Hence, it refrains from adhering to one particular notion of critical thinking and takes somewhat of a broader perspective, essentially allowing and thus 'leaving the door open' for a serious consideration of what could be labelled as mainstream positions. In order to minimize the problems of selection and coherence that almost every compilation inevitably faces, all contributions in this collection address the issue of dialogue, albeit from different angles and with different research agendas, and link their critical studies either implicitly or explicitly to the report of the high-level advisory group which was established at the initiative of the President of the European Commission (High-Level Advisory Group, 2003). Moreover, although it is undoubtedly tempting to anchor one's analysis to a certain concept of culture such as, for instance, Hall's and Hall's model of behavioural components of culture (Hall and Hall, 1990) or Hofstede's five-dimensional concept of cultural difference (Hofstede, 1991), each contribution is based on the awareness that any definition of culture is inevitably biased by the person doing the defining (Demorgon and Molz, 1996).

With the objective of bringing young, critical European Political Scientists together, the compilation opens with a contribution by Michelle Pace, Research Fellow at the European Research Institute at the University of Birmingham, that uncovers the multi-faceted challenges facing the 37 partners in developing mutual and sustainable relations through dialogue. Starting from the assumption that a systematic analysis of what Euro-Mediterranean dialogue actually implies and how it shapes Euro-Mediterranean relations as well as national agendas is lacking, she presents a theoretical discussion of the meaning of dialogue by drawing upon the work of Mikhail Bakhtin and the four-dimensional group development model of Bruce Tuckman. The application of this thinking enables her to divide Euro-Mediterranean relations into four analytical phases, namely a forming, a storming, a norming and, finally, a performing phase, which offer an empirical overview of the diversity of voices, that, in turn, have been constraining the imagined co-presence in the framework of the EMP. Moreover, it is advanced that, despite ten years of what is considered by the 37 partners as dialogue, ample space for critical self-reflection and an overlap of the Self and the Other is not discernable. Neither have the EU nor

the MNC adapted to the language of the Other. Notwithstanding this shortcoming, it is concluded that the EMP, and herewith its institutional structures providing for dialogic encounters, is a process which has the potential to develop into an inter-subjective, meaning formation and perpetual cognition mechanism for all parties involved.

In the thrust to address the issue of (inter-)cultural dialogue from different perspectives, the following three contributions at first glance seem to be very similar as they all question and challenge the conceptual underpinnings, as well as the apparently accepted Euro-Mediterranean world view of dialogue. Yet, they differ largely as they approach the matter from different strands of critical thinking, thus travelling, to paraphrase the late Susan Strange, 'from different starting points and ending at different destinations' (Strange, 1994: 16), thereby occasionally crossing each other's path at highly illuminating intellectual junctures. In her essay, Raffaella Del Sarto, Marie Curie Research Fellow at the Mediterranean Programme at the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies at the European University Institute in Florence, concentrates her analysis on three intertwined issues, that is culture, community and representation in Euro-Mediterranean relations. To this end, her approach is three-fold: In a first step, she revisits Huntington's 'clash of civilizations paradigm' and its set of ontological foundations and implications for today's international relations because, as the author shows, it has increasingly taken hold of many public discourses in the 'West' and beyond. Revealing a growing tendency of depicting cultures and civilizations as autonomous agents engaging in dialogue with each other, Del Sarto shows that the process of defining communities in world politics is an arbitrary one that includes some actors while necessarily excluding others. Hence, 'the nation-state logic of community stands in contrast to the idea of global society and the universality of the rights of human beings'. This insight serves as the starting-point for the second step of her analysis whereby she discusses very important questions such as 'how are cultures and culture defined, how are meanings imposed, who represents the alleged cultures within the inter-cultural dialogue, and how do these patterns of representation affect both world politics and the EMP?' Based on these rather problematic and thought-provoking findings, she finally turns toward the Anna Lindh Foundation as a case study and concludes with a plea for a redrawing of the boundaries of difference and similarity in the EMP through the creation of a trans-cultural dialogue along clear-cut thematic lines.

Following it, Stephan Stetter, Research Associate at the Institute for World Society Studies at the University of Bielefeld, in his contribution on semantics and structures of cultural dialogue, adopts a systems theoretical perspective and looks into the construction of identity discourses in Euro-Mediterranean relations and explains how and to what extent these 'semantics of identity' relate to and impact upon cultural dialogue taking place in the framework of the Barcelona Process. By identifying the Self/Other distinctions that underpin the entire Process, he highlights the powerful role they play and argues that they cultivate and promote a semantic and, most importantly, hegemonic, construction of culture which eventually acts as a prime differential category between Europe and the southern Mediterranean. In more concrete terms, Stetter points out that the institutionalization of the Euro-

Mediterranean cultural dialogue is an example of the politics of de-paradoxification since its political significance rests on the 'conflictive fundamentals inherent in this concept'. As alternative forms with which collective identity patterns in the Euro-Mediterranean area could be processed, his contribution offers three possible points of departure: First, integration could be achieved through less emphasis on value-laden and normative concepts, such as cultural dialogue. Second, picking up on one of the arguments of the first contributions of this volume, both the EU and the MNC are, in the view of the author, well advised to concentrate on the shared world societal reference point of their relations, rather than observing and instrumentalizing cultural differences. Third, more attention on the part of all parties involved is needed with regard to the divergent and cross-cutting debordering processes in Euro-Mediterranean relations.

In contrast, the next contribution authored by Helle Malmvig, Research Fellow at the Department of Conflict and Security Studies at the Danish Institute for International Affairs in Copenhagen, analyses the consequences of framing the Euro-Mediterranean inter-cultural dialogue within a context of security. Inspired by the Copenhagen School's conceptualization of security and by applying Habermas' theory of communicative action, she shows how inter-cultural dialogue is represented as a means to achieve security in the Euro-Mediterranean area and points to the implications of this representation. The application of Habermas' line of thinking, as well as the utilization of Critical Theory enable her to put forward the argument that a securitization of the dialogue takes place and that this phenomenon has provided Euro-Mediterranean cultural dialogue with 'extraordinary legitimacy and urgency, while at the same time compromising the very conditions of possibility for a dialogue along Habermasian lines.' Hence, it is contended that the dialogue has become extremely politicized and an object of tight control of governmental actors north and south of the Mediterranean sea. This, in turn, constrains the effective implementation of the dialogue to the extent that, according to Malmvig, only certain themes and some carefully selected civil society groups are considered. Given these rather sobering findings, it is not surprising that the current dialogue, in the words of the author, 'risks to be confined to intellectual exchanges and conferences rallying cosmopolitan elites, who are reinforcing their (similar) worldviews and values, leaving little impact on the general population.'

In a way, this contribution prepares the ground for the next article, entitled 'Global Civil Society across the Mediterranean: The Case of Human Rights', written by Laura Feliu, Lecturer on International Relations at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (UAB). Against the backdrop of research on democratization and political transition, Feliu adopts a more actor-oriented approach and examines the scope and role of global civil society, with a special emphasis on human rights, in the context of the Euro-Mediterranean (inter-)cultural dialogue, both from a conceptual and empirical point of view. As the Anna Lindh Foundation, as well as the Barcelona Declaration and the EMAA, consider civil society groups as the most important agents of any dialogic encounter, Feliu's insights are extremely noteworthy and of particular importance for any political decision to be taken with respect to the third basket: Although the establishment of the EMP has significantly

boosted the reinforcement and creation of new trans-national human rights networks in the Euro-Mediterranean area, trans-national links created by human rights civil society associations on the southern shore of the Mediterranean area are still weak and underdeveloped. Consequently, as is pointed out, southern Mediterranean NGOs are under-represented within international fora and, thus, limited in their scope of influence and agenda-setting. The most active southern civil society associations can be, according to Feliu, found in those MNC that she considers as liberalized autocracies. Yet, even within the context of a more open and less repressive environment, the members of these networks show signs of significant heterogeneity. Furthermore, trans-national civil society dialogue is additionally hampered by the fact that the direction of trans-national ties is vertical, that is between associations from the south and the north of the Mediterranean, but hardly horizontal across MNC borders.

Sara Silvestri, PhD researcher at the Centre of International Studies at the University of Cambridge, was invited to add a more empirical dimension to this volume and to shed some light on the recent EU attitudes and initiatives towards Islam, most of all in the context of the EMP, but also in policy areas, such as Justice and Home Affairs and Social Affairs, which both impact on the Barcelona Process and herewith its dialogic dimension. It becomes obvious from this contribution that any initiatives intended to promote civilizational, inter-cultural or inter-faith dialogue have neither produced any concrete results, nor led to a clear vision on how to improve relations with, as well as within, religious and ethnic communities in Europe and the Mediterranean. With this in view, Silvestri certainly joins the previous authors in their general critique of the Euro-Mediterranean dialogue's un-successful and exclusive world view and structure, but strikes a more optimistic chord to the extent that she regards more positively the symbolic meaning of the EU's efforts of disseminating a new attitude toward the use of dialogue as a tool of cultural rapprochement, and, most importantly, of democratic development and social justice.

Finally, the volume ends with a contribution by Joachim James Calleja, lecturer in the Department of International Relations at the University of Malta and acting Chief Executive Officer of the Malta Qualifications Council, who addresses the impact of education and employment on Euro-Mediterranean cohesion and identity. He convincingly argues that the Euro-Mediterranean space is exposed *to* and suffering *from* a divide syndrome which manifests itself through conflicts, prejudices, intolerance, neo-colonial patterns of behaviour, segregation and the lack of an endogenous approach to regional policies. This syndrome, the author argues, has been seen by many in the South 'as a means to protect conceptual, moral and behavioural patterns of the nation-state which either incarnated the principles of religion and made them its own or coexisted with such principles in order to secure its own existence.' As it is rightfully claimed that the EMP lacks a balanced and symmetrical ownership, Calleja borrows from Abel's Kantian-inspired concept of unlimited communities of communication and presents a framework, based on employment and education, which may have the potential to overcome this gap. Yet, as is contended, this may be the case only as long as the educational challenge starts

as part of a community of communication of the Euro-Mediterranean area that, in turn, regards human beings as equals irrespective of ethnicity or creed.

This volume is the outcome of a series of workshops related to the dynamics of Euro-Mediterranean relations in general (ECPR, Bologna, June 2004) and to culture and community in the framework of the EMP in particular (Swedish Institute, Alexandria, October 2003 and Friedrich Ebert Foundation, Rabat, December 2004), co-organized by the two editors. Our thanks go to the Swedish Institute and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation, respectively, whose financial support was key to the workshops in Alexandria and Rabat. We would like to extend our gratitude to the participants of the meetings for their active participation and contributions, and, last but not least, to Richard Gillespie for his unconditional and invaluable support throughout the process of compiling and publishing this volume. As we are convinced that cultural co-operation must not and cannot be neither conducted in a voluntaristic fashion nor be achieved through central political decisions, we sincerely hope that this volume, with its inclination towards theory, comparative analysis and the evaluation of past practice, can shed some light on how best to achieve a true dialogue in an area of marked complexity and conflict such as the Mediterranean.

Notes

- ¹ The 12 MNC were Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, Malta and Cyprus. Since May 2004, Malta and Cyprus became members of the EU and, thus, are not considered as MNC.
- ² Presidency Conclusions of the Euro-Mediterranean Conference of Minister of Foreign Affairs in Naples, 2–3 December 2003.
- ³ See the Foreword, written by the former Italian Ambassador in charge of the Barcelona Process, Antonio Badini (in Panebianco, 2003: ix).

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